

United States House of Representatives



**Subcommittee on National Security,  
Emerging Threats and International Relations**

Christopher Shays, Connecticut  
Chairman

B-372 Rayburn House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
Phone: 202-225-2548  
Fax: 202-225-2382

**For Immediate Release  
March 17, 2005**

**Contact: Robert Briggs**

### **Shays Calls Hearing on Anthrax Detections**

Rep. Christopher Shays, Chairman of the House Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations, today announced he will convene an oversight hearing April 5 to examine the federal response to anthrax detections.

“Some time ago, we were told critical gaps remained in detection, sampling and data analysis protocols for biological contaminants like anthrax,” Shays said. “There also appeared to be little coordination between federal agencies on filling those scientific and operational gaps. So we asked the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study anthrax detection methodologies and policies.”

GAO findings and recommendations on interagency coordination and validation of detection methods will be released at the hearing.

Shays added, “More than three years after the anthrax mail attacks, the lack of standardized detection and testing procedures poses a risk to national security. Every false positive brings multiple federal agencies stumbling to the scene with no real plan, and every false negative risks complacency in the face of a lethal threat.”

The hearing will convene Tuesday, April 5, 2 p.m. in room 2247 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

Among those invited to testify will be witnesses from: the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Postal Services, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Association of State Public Health Laboratories.